

NOTICE.

A. S. WATSON & CO.
FAMILY AND DISPENSING
CHEMISTS.

By Appointment to His Excellency the Governor and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh.

WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DRUGGISTS.

PATENT MEDICINE VENDORS.

DRUGGISTS' SYNDICATE.

AND
AERATED WATER MAKERS.

SHIPS' MEDICINE CHESTS REEQUIPPED.

PASSENGER SHIPS SUPPLIED.

Notice.—To avoid delay in the execution of Orders it is particularly requested that all business communications be addressed to the Firm, A. S. Watson & Co., or to
HONGKONG DISPENSARY.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications on Editorial matters should be addressed "The Editor," and those on business "The Manager," and not to individuals by name.

Correspondents are requested to forward their names and addresses with communications addressed to the Editor, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith.

All letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.

Advertisements and Subscriptions which are not ordered for a fixed period will be continued until countermanded.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, SEPTEMBER 27th, 1884.

ALTHOUGH there can be no doubt, that the communication made by the Taoist to the Foreign Consuls at Shanghai was intended as a formal notice that China had declared war against France, the Hongkong Government have, so far, not been officially informed of the fact. Neither have the French officials here, we believe, received any intimation to that effect. Matters, therefore, will at present, so far as the sale of arms, provisions, &c., to the belligerents is concerned, go on as before. A proclamation of the neutrality of the port will have to precede any action being taken by the local authorities, and official notice of the declaration of war by either of the belligerents will have to come from Downing Street. As stated in the *Gazette* notification, the action already taken by the Colonial Government respecting the enforcement of the Foreign Enlistment Act, &c., was directed from home, and no change will be made except on the receipt of special instructions from the Secretary of State. The Imperial Government will give instructions to the Governor by telegraph with respect to each successive step to be taken. At present both sides derive equal benefit from the proclamation of neutrality not having been made. The French ships are suffered to get repairs effected here; the Chinese are permitted to buy arms and munitions of war. Of course all this would be put a stop to on receipt of an official notification that war has been declared. It is probable that in a day or two at most, such official notice, and the necessary instructions with it, will arrive from Downing Street.

One of the recommendations of the Smuggling Commission which sat last year was that the gathering together of unauthorised armed bands in British territory, for any purpose whatever, should be prohibited, and that the provisions of law now in force with reference to those persons who do not hold night passes should be made applicable to the entire area of the colony. It has been decided by the magistrates that the law as it at present stands applies only to the City of Victoria. The Commissioners found from the evidence adduced in the inquiry that the great increase which has taken place in the levy of duty and other taxes upon foreign opium on the mainland has led, within the last two years, to an organised system of smuggling from the colony to places at some considerable distance within the neighbouring province of Kwangtung. Bands of men are formed, to whom are given a certain number of balls or casks of opium by dealers in this colony, who undertake to pay the bazaar of this opium some dollars per ball or cask delivered at a named place in the interior. These bands, which are sometimes well armed, cross the harbour to the mainland, or rather together in British Colonies, and endeavour either singly or in parties to evade the guards at the two or three passes in the mountains which are alone practicable to the transit of merchandise. Collisions have been reported to the police of Hongkong as having occurred at some distance in the interior between these bands of smugglers and the Customs guards, with alleged loss of life. The state of the law, the Commission says, or the administration of it, in respect of the assembling of unauthorised armed bands on British territory, obviously called for the attention of the Executive. We have made these extracts from the Commissioners' report on account of the bearing they lay on the collision between smugglers and revenue officers, which occurred on Friday night just over the boundary line between British and Chinese territory at Kowloon. A band of opium smugglers, numbering, according to their own report, one hundred and sixty was beaten back by the revenue people, and it was said two men had been killed in the encounter, but this appears rather doubtful, as no dead bodies were found. It is clearly the duty of the Hongkong Government to prevent, as far as possible, armed bands making excursions from this colony into Chinese territory for unlawful purposes. The British authorities are not called upon to protect the Chinese revenue by any system of espionage or search to be practised on this side, but the departure of armed bands from the colony is a different matter and ought to be prevented, whether the object of the bands be smuggling, arm-raiding, or any other purpose. The Secretary of State expressed his approval of the recommendation of the Smuggling Commission, and saying that the necessity of some action being taken in the sense indicated has by no means decreased since the date of the report, it would be well that the Government should introduce the required measure at an early stage of the next session of the Legislative Council.

The Russian corvette *Narvinsk* left Wanchow on the 24th inst. for Hongkong.The American Consul paid a visit on board *La Galles* yesterday and received the usual salute upon leaving.

On Sunday evening His Excellency Sir George Bowen entertained Rear-Admiral Leys, M. de Bessieres, and M. and Madame de la Motte at Mount Lodge.

The Agent informs us that the O. and O. steamer *Arctic*, with mails, &c., from San Francisco to the 19th ult., has arrived at Yokohama and will sail for this port tomorrow, the 20th inst.Recruiting is going on in the city of Wanchow and the vicinity of Tientsin to send already large forces now assembled at Fookchow. The *Courier* learns that 3,000 men have already been enrolled and will be sent on to their destination as soon as possible.Some two hundred and fifty tons of heavy iron have recently arrived at Shanghai from many and are to be transported to the north. So far, only about two miles of rail have been received, but more will follow.—*N. C. Daily News*.The *N. C. Daily News* of the 24th inst. states:—The *Sir Garnet Wolseley* has cleared for Yokohama with coals. There is a rumour that the sailing date of the vessel is not far from Fookchow. We give the rumour for what it is worth.Among the passengers by the *Yokohama*, which left Shanghai on the 24th inst., were the Viscounts de Sommeville, lately in charge of the French Legation at Peking, and the Rev. C. de la Motte, of the United States Legation at the same place.

According to the census of 1883, the population of Cambodia was 4,000,000, and of this number 130,000 were slaves. These were divided as follows:—Government slaves, 58,000; Mandarin slaves, 36,000; and private slaves, 45,000. Under the new treaty with France slavery is to be abolished.

The *Shen-pao* bears that Admiral Courbet has detached a squadron of five ships under Admiral Despaty to try and get a foothold on Taiwan, and that it is the intention of Admiral Courbet, after having completed the reconquest of the more remote islands to go north, and that these islands will arrive shortly.

Admiral Leys was ashore on Sunday and had a small escort of Sikh Police. This was given him presumably in consequence of the proclamation by the Chinese Authorities stating a price on the heads of French officers. Many of the French officers, however, are in Canton, and no doubt to be glad to earn the reward if they had a chance.

We hear that the operations at the Tam Chor mines, near Canton, have so far proved very promising, and a considerable quantity of silver has already been got out. The work is at present, so far as the sale of arms, provisions, &c., to the belligerents is concerned, go on as before. A proclamation of the neutrality of the port will have to precede any action being taken by the local authorities, and official notice of the declaration of war by either of the belligerents will have to come from Downing Street. As stated in the *Gazette* notification, the action already taken by the Colonial Government respecting the enforcement of the Foreign Enlistment Act, &c., was directed from home, and no change will be made except on the receipt of special instructions from the Secretary of State. The Imperial Government will give instructions to the Governor by telegraph with respect to each successive step to be taken. At present both sides derive equal benefit from the proclamation of neutrality not having been made. The French ships are suffered to get repairs effected here; the Chinese are permitted to buy arms and munitions of war. Of course all this would be put a stop to on receipt of an official notification that war has been declared. It is probable that in a day or two at most, such official notice, and the necessary instructions with it, will arrive from Downing Street.

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The Commercial Intelligence, &c., will be found on our fourth page.

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The British corvette

11/11/1964

[1999] 1st July, 1999	[1999] Hong Kong, 1st September, 1999	[1999] Hong Kong
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